



Stonewall still means FIGHT BACK!

Defending trans lives: a tale of two systems

By Bob McCubbin

On May 24, the Washington Blade reported on the Trump administration's latest assault on transgender rights. On the day before a long holiday weekend, the Department of Health and Human Services proposed a rule that would strip the Affordable Care Act of its protections for transgender folk and women.

Until now, the ACA, also known as Obamacare, has offered protection to trans people and women against acts of discrimination by health care practitioners. The regulation change announced by HHS will eliminate these protections.

In a pathetic effort to minimize the outrageous character of the new rule, the HHS noted that it would continue to enforce nondiscrimination on the basis of "race, color, national origin, disability, age and sex." Although the statement doesn't explain how, HHS asserted that the rule change will save taxpayers \$3.6 billion over the next five years.

A recent "conscience" rule change by the Trump administration already protects health care bigots who refuse to deal with sex reassignment cases or abortions. And, in a further assault on trans rights, the Department of Housing and Urban Development proposed eliminating a rule that previously protected homeless transgender folk from discrimination at homeless shelters funded by the government.

The Washington Blade article notes that a Supreme Court case due to be ruled on soon "could either affirm decades of case law defending transgender people, or throw them out with a single ruling."

Of course, trans people are not just under attack by the Trump administration. Scarcely a week passes without the news of another trans person, most often a trans woman of color, murdered. On the same day as the HHS announcement, a gathering of 200 trans activists and supporters in New York's Washington Square Park demanded an end to the murders of Black transgender women. Their

protest focused on the slayings of three Black trans women that occurred in the space of one week less than a month ago. Claire Legato died from gunshot wounds in Cleveland, Muhlaysia Bookan was killed in Dallas and Michelle Washington was murdered in Philadelphia.

A Reuters report on the New York protest noted that "at least 26 transgender women were reported killed in 2018 and 29 in 2017" in the U.S. But the truth is that many murderous attacks on trans women, especially on Black trans women, never get reported or are mischaracterized by the police.

Different history in Cuba

What an outrageous contrast with the conditions of life for trans folk in Cuba. Not that the enemies of Cuba would be at all concerned with the well-being of differently gendered people, but they have never been able to accuse Cuba of harboring violence against Cuban trans people because it doesn't exist in that socialist country.

What the U.S. capitalist media don't like to publicize is exactly that dramatic difference in social status plus the fact that trans people in Cuba have free access to quality health care, as do all Cubans, and that includes free access to sex reassignment surgery on demand. For women, free reproductive care, including the right to a safe abortion on demand, is available to all Cuban women.

Socialist Cuba's achievements in the areas of health care, education and equal rights for all have been won despite the continuing open hostility of the imperialist monster to the north. The relentless efforts of the U.S. to recolonize Cuba, most notably using the ever tightening economic blockade, have made social progress more difficult, but all the more remarkable.

Cuba needs our solidarity. Demand that the U.S. end its illegal blockade of the island nation! And express your solidarity with the Washington Square protestors who chanted, "Black trans lives matter!" 🇺🇸

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GLOBAL

KENYA

LGBTQ2S activist Binyavanga Wainaina



One of Africa's most important authors and gay rights activists, Binyavanga Wainaina, died May 22 at age 48. According to his family, he died after suffering a stroke.

Wainaina won the 2002 Caine Prize for his short story "Discovering Home." His satirical essay "How to Write About Africa" was a sensation.

"Always use the word 'Africa' or 'Darkness' or 'Safari' in your title," it began. "Subtitles may include the words 'Zanzibar', 'Masai', 'Zulu', 'Zambezi', 'Congo', 'Nile', 'Big', 'Sky', 'Shadow', 'Drum', 'Sun' or 'Bygone,'" Wainaina advised in the piece. "Treat Africa as if it were one country."

Wainaina was also a leading activist in the LGBTQ2S community, coming out publicly in 2014 as gay. He also revealed he was HIV-positive.

In May last year, Binyavanga proposed to his long-term Nigerian partner and they were set to marry early this year in South Africa, where same-sex marriage is legal.

COLOMBIA

National Strike continues

On April 25, as part of the National Strike, hundreds of thousands of workers, teachers, students, doctors, pensioners, peasants, Indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples mobilized across Colombia against the neo-liberal National Development Plan (PND) of the right-wing government of President Iván Duque and in support of the peace agreements signed between the former government of Juan Manuel Santos and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

Rallies took place in Bogotá and other major cities across this South American nation. In Bogotá, the Mobile Anti-Riot Squad police attacked demonstrators at the conclusion of the march and rally. Students were also attacked by police at the entrance of Bogotá's National University.

More at tinyurl.com/y4n3krj9



Partial general strike

On May 22, thousands of workers mobilized in Montevideo, Uruguay, in solidarity with the gas workers of MontevideoGas, who have been fighting against Petrobras, a Brazilian oil and gas distribution company, since the last week of April.

The workers marched through the center of Montevideo demanding government intervention against Petrobras.

The mobilization was carried out as part of a four-hour partial general strike called by the Plenario Intersindical de Trabajadores – Convención Nacional de Trabajadores (PIT-CNT), a national trade union center in Uruguay.

More at tinyurl.com/y6exva2a 🇺🇷



May Day 2019: International Workers' Day celebrated in Cuba.

PHOTO: BILL HACKWELL

Celebrating Two-Spirit Pride — for thousands of years!

By M. Tiahui

Perhaps you have heard the term “Two Spirit” used along with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other terms. If you are not Indigenous, this may have made you think that “Two Spirit” refers to Indigenous people who are lesbian, gay or bi. But being Two Spirit does not necessarily mean that someone is lesbian or gay since it does not refer to sexual preference.

“Two Spirit” is a pan-Indian umbrella term that describes Indigenous people who have mixed or non-binary gender roles. The term first began to gain popularity in the late 1980s and is now used widely throughout Canada and the U.S., and other Indigenous people, such as the Zapotec in Mexico, also recognize the concept.

While the term is relatively new, the concept has existed among hundreds of Indigenous Nations for thousands of years. Some Native Nations have terms for up to 4 or 5 different genders, for instance. Two Spirit people are considered to be nonbinary and to hold sacred elements of both feminine and masculine within them.

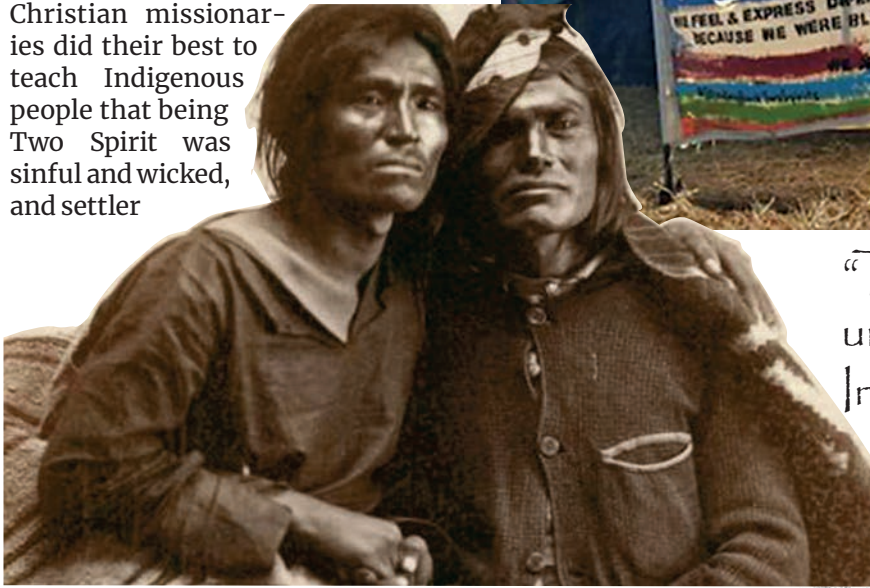
These Indigenous understandings came long before and exist outside of the “LGBTQ” terminology that is often used now. A Two Spirit person may be lesbian or gay, but being lesbian or gay does not necessarily make someone Two Spirit.

Two Spirit people have existed for thousands of years. Many tribal nations understood that there were people who were not part of a male/female binary. In fact, some nations believed that there were multiple genders, not just two.

Traditionally, in many tribal nations, Two Spirit people were held in high esteem. They were leaders, warriors, medicine (spiritual) people. They often played a special

role with youth, including adopting children and giving special sacred names to babies.

When the Christian Europeans invaded, however, they held Two Spirit people in extreme contempt. Two Spirit people were often killed or forced to hide who they were. The Christian missionaries did their best to teach Indigenous people that being Two Spirit was sinful and wicked, and settler



“Two Spirit” is a pan-Indian umbrella term that describes Indigenous people who have mixed or non-binary gender roles

colonial laws and customs forbade the existence of people who were not specifically male or female.

Because of this repression, more and more Native people turned away from their ancient understandings — but not all. However, it became more difficult for Two Spirit people to be who they are, and in many places they had to function in an underground way.

Challenging disrespect

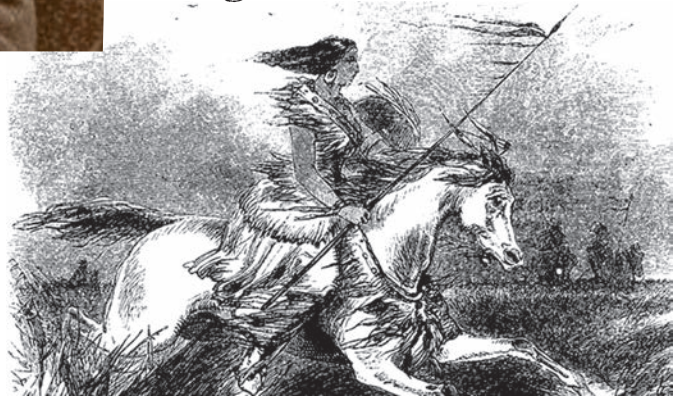
By the 20th century, some Two Spirit people from reservations left for the cities where there were lesbian and gay communities. Some of them founded urban Native groups, such as Gay American Indians (GAI) in San Francisco, and many of them faced anti-Indigenous racism in the cities, as well. Sometimes white people even told them that Native people could not possibly be lesbian or gay or Two Spirit due to some bizarre



stereotypical views held by non-Natives. It could be difficult for Two Spirit people to feel completely at home anywhere.

But increasingly, more and more Two Spirit people have let their families and tribes know who they really are. If they are not treated with respect, they challenge this, especially when it was their own tribal tradition to honor Two Spirit people.

During the 2016-2017 Standing Rock encampments to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline, Two Spirit people banded together and worked on many projects. Two Spirit people at Standing Rock played a very important spiritual role and tried to do everything in a good way to bring healing to the thousands of people gathered there.



With leadership provided by people like Candi Brings Plenty, this was a very important step forward in the overall Native struggle. When some Native people at camp were not accepting of them, others strongly challenged this and reminded everyone of their traditional cultures.

Sometimes non-Native people refer to themselves as Two Spirit. That is disrespectful, since it is an appropriation of a distinctively Indigenous concept and term.

During this month of June 2019, and throughout the year, Pride parades and powwows will celebrate Two Spirit people, from Saskatoon to the Bay Area to the Navajo Pride Parade. Honoring Two Spirit people is an important part of decolonization — washing settler colonial ideas out of our brains and returning to deeper understandings that existed long before the rise of patriarchy, capitalism, settler colonialism and the European invasion of Indigenous lands. [R]

Stop the bans: Defend abortion rights!



On May 21, women, trans and non-binary people, and other workers rallied in hundreds of cities and towns across the U.S. to #StopTheBans and defend reproductive rights. Activists from Struggle-La Lucha joined actions in various cities, including Baltimore and Washington, D.C. (pictured here).

The day of action was called by a broad coalition after the passage of Alabama's abortion ban. The law, signed by the governor on May 15, would jail doctors who perform the procedure for up to 99 years and criminalize women and others who seek abortions, even in cases of rape or incest.



SLL PHOTOS; LEFT, SHARON BLACK; ABOVE: CHERYL LABASH

Seven other states have passed extreme anti-abortion laws this year in a coordinated effort to overturn Roe v. Wade, the 1973 ruling that legalized abortion, following Donald Trump's appointment of ultraright misogynist Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Fight back! We won't go back! [R]

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Honor Marielle Franco and Chelsea Manning Pride & anti-war struggle go hand-in-hand

By James Costello

This June marks the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion against police brutality and anti-LGBTQ2S oppression that was led by working-class, Black and Brown, trans and queer peoples.

The legacy of Stonewall is a fighting legacy that we must study and continue to develop. The corporate control of Pride events must be challenged. Police and military personnel do not belong at Pride and their presence creates an unsafe environment for oppressed peoples that are targeted the most by this system.

We have to honor and remember the veterans of the liberation struggle, especially those that are killed or imprisoned for their organizing efforts. Marielle Franco was a leader against government corruption and police brutality in Brazil. As Brazil was undergoing a right-wing turn under U.S. influence, she was assassinated for speaking out against the oppression that her people face. We have a duty to defend freedom fighters like Chelsea Manning, another activist leader, who is once again behind prison walls for exposing U.S. war crimes.

Stonewall's anti-war legacy

The history of the trans and queer liberation movement, as well as the women's and oppressed genders' liberation movement, has been a legacy of anti-war organizing in the streets. The Vietnam War was raging at the time of the Stonewall Rebellion and Vietnamese resistance to U.S. occupation was one of its inspirations.

U.S. imperialism means death and destruction for oppressed nations



Chelsea Manning

throughout the world and this includes the LGBTQ2S peoples within these nations. We have a duty to reclaim these Pride events and bring a message of solidarity with the people of Venezuela, Cuba, Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and all those who are defending themselves from U.S. coups, wars and sanctions.

Queer and trans peoples have nothing to gain by joining the U.S. armed services in a nation that has only recently allowed for them to have basic rights and protections. It's important to note that these gains have only come as a result of militant struggle against their oppression in the streets.

For many LGBTQ2S people who join the military, it comes as a result of living in a society where they are constantly denied jobs, housing and education opportunities. The system does not care about the liberation of queer and trans people, but only about how they can be used as pawns in the quest to rob the resources

and labor of oppressed nations throughout the world.

Black and Brown trans and queer people are being murdered at alarming rates here at home and abroad by the police and reactionaries that serve the interests of the ruling class. The U.S. government has imposed reactionary ways of thinking through colonial tools of domination and forced assimilation throughout the world. It has no right to position itself as a moral champion of human rights. The struggle for LGBTQ2S liberation is a struggle against racism, sexism and imperialism.

All of these tools of oppression are products of the capitalist system that exploits the workers and oppressed peoples. The struggle against fascism and imperialism is an international struggle. In the U.S., we have a responsibility as revolutionaries to oppose the U.S. government's aggression against oppressed nations of the world.

Chelsea Manning leads by example

Former Army Pvt. Chelsea Manning is a trans freedom fighter who heroically exposed the crimes of U.S. imperialism in Iraq and Afghanistan, working alongside Wikileaks. She served seven years in prison before being released after pressure was put on the Obama administration. Democrats and Republicans alike are part of this attack on whistleblowers and journalists who expose what U.S. foreign policy really means for the rest of the world.

Manning was recently sent back to jail after she refused to comply with two grand juries investigating

Wikileaks founder Julian Assange. The "Justice" Department has just brought an 18-count indictment against Assange for his role in publishing vital information obtained from Manning and other whistleblowers in the interests of the people.

The capitalist state claims that Assange violated the Espionage Act, similarly to the way they used this act to attack many other anti-war voices, including socialists, communists and anarchists, throughout history. This is also part of the two ruling-class parties' anti-Russia propaganda campaign.

It is important that we bring an anti-war platform to Pride demonstrations all across the U.S. to declare that we support Chelsea Manning and the work of Wikileaks.

Marielle Franco stood up to imperialist influence

In Brazil, a historic vote from the Supreme Court took place May 23 that provided protections for LGBTQ people against discrimination. This victory was the result of the people's organizing efforts in the streets. This is a very important development considering the vile nature of the homophobic, racist president of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro.

It doesn't mean that the country is safe for trans and queer people, especially not for Black LGBTQ women. Radical political activists who fight for the liberation of the most oppressed are targeted. This was the story of Marielle Franco.

Franco was a human rights defender, activist and political organizer who was assassinated for her commitment to the liberation of all

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Lift the sanctions on Zimbabwe!

By Stephen Millies

More than a hundred people demonstrated in Washington, D.C., on May 25 — African Liberation Day — to demand justice for Zimbabwe. They marched from the African American Civil War Memorial to the White House, which was built by enslaved Africans.

The message to Donald Trump was "Lift the sanctions on Zimbabwe!"

As Omowale Clay, a member of the International Secretariat of the December 12th Movement, noted at an earlier news conference: "Nearly two decades ago, the U.S. passed the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 [ZIDERA] to punish Zimbabwe for having had the audacity to return to the people the land stolen by white colonial settlers.

'Sanctions are an act of war'

"The goals of the sanctions imposed by ZIDERA were to make the Zimbabwean economy 'scream' — to make conditions so bad for the masses of the people that they would overthrow the ZANU-PF-led government and stop the confiscation of land from white settlers. President Trump has just renewed the sanctions for another year."

The December 12th Movement and



SLL PHOTOS: SHARON BLACK

countries also suffer from the sanctions on Zimbabwe.

Dr. Guni also paid tribute to Coltrane Chimurenga, field marshal of the December 12th Movement, who passed away on May 13. Field Marshall Chimurenga was considered a national hero in Zimbabwe because of his support of the liberation struggle there.

Andre Powell, from Struggle-La Lucha and the Socialist Unity Party, declared that "Sanctions are an act of war. ... The United States and European imperialists have committed acts of war against so many govern-

ments in the continent of Africa. ...

"When you sanction a country, you interfere with that country's ability to give food and medicine to its people so that they die," continued Powell.

In just the last 13 years, sanctions have cost Zimbabwe \$4.2 billion. The struggle against the HIV-AIDS pandemic has been harmed.

Powell pointed out that Venezuela, Iran and Cuba were also victimized by U.S. sanctions but refuse to surrender their sovereignty. He declared, "We stand with Zimbabwe! To hell with Trump!"

¡Stonewall todavía significa lucha!

Problemas de vidas trans: Una historia de dos sistemas

Por: Bob McCubbin

El 24 de Mayo, el Washington Blade reportó en el internet acerca del último asalto de la administración de Trump contra los derechos trans. Un día antes del largo fin de semana festivo, el Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos (HHS por sus siglas en inglés) propuso una medida que quitaría a la Ley del Cuidado de Salud a Bajo Precio (ACA siglas en inglés) las protecciones para la gente trans y las mujeres.

Hasta ahora, el ACA, también conocida como Obamacare, ofrece protección a la gente trans y a las mujeres contra actos discriminatorios por los que ofrecen los servicios de salud. Este cambio de regulación anunciada por el HHS eliminará estas protecciones.

En un esfuerzo patético para minimizar el carácter indignante de esta nueva medida, el HHS nota que continuará reforzando la no discriminación basada en “raza, color, origen nacional, discapacidad, edad y sexo”. Aunque la declaración no explica cómo, HHS afirma que el cambio en la medida le ahorrará a los contribuyentes \$3.6 mil millones en los próximos cinco años.

Un cambio reciente en la regla de “conciencia” por la administración de Trump ya protege a los proveedores de salud extremistas que se rehúsan a trabajar con casos de reasignación sexual o abortos. Y, en un nuevo ataque a los derechos trans, el Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano, ha propuesto eliminar una regla que anteriormente protegía a personas transgénero sin hogar de la discriminación en refugios para personas sin hogar financiados por el gobierno.

El artículo del Washington Blade nota que un caso en que se espera que la Corte Suprema se pronuncie pronto “puede reafirmar décadas de casos legales defendiendo los derechos de la gente trans o descartarlos con un solo fallo”.

Por supuesto, el pueblo trans no sólo está bajo ataque por la administración de Trump. No pasa ni una semana sin que aparezca la noticia de que otra persona trans, a menudo una mujer trans de color, sea asesinada. El mismo día del anuncio de HHS, una reunión de 200 activistas trans y sus simpatizantes en el Washington Square Park de Nueva York, exigió el fin de los asesinatos de mujeres negras transgénero. Su protesta se centró en los asesinatos de tres mujeres trans negras que ocurrieron en el espacio de una semana hace menos de un mes. Claire Legato murió por heri-

das de disparo en Cleveland, Muhlaysia Booken fue asesinada en Dallas y a Michelle Washington la asesinaron en Filadelfia.

Un reporte de Reuters acerca de la protesta en Nueva York notó que “al menos 26 mujeres transgénero fueron reportadas asesinadas en 2018 y 29 en 2017” en los EUA. Pero la realidad es que muchos ataques contra mujeres trans, especialmente contra mujeres trans negras, nunca son reportados o son mis-caracterizados por la policía.

Diferente historia en Cuba

Qué contraste tan escandaloso con las condiciones de vida de las personas trans en Cuba. No es que los enemigos de Cuba se preocupen por el bienestar de personas con diferente género, pero nunca han podido acusar a Cuba de violencia contra la gente cubana trans porque en este país socialista eso no existe.

Lo que la prensa capitalista de los EUA no le gusta publicar es exactamente esta diferencia tan drástica en el estado social, como también el

hecho de que las personas trans en Cuba tengan acceso gratuito a atención médica de calidad, al igual que todos los cubanos, incluyendo también el acceso gratuito a la cirugía de reasignación de sexo. Para todas las mujeres cubanas, hay atención reproductiva gratuita, incluyendo el derecho a un aborto seguro.

Los logros de Cuba socialista en las áreas de atención médica, educación e igualdad de derechos para todos se han ganado a pesar de la continua hostilidad abierta del monstruo imperialista del norte. Los incansables esfuerzos de los Estados Unidos por re-colonizar Cuba, en particular mediante el bloqueo económico cada vez más estricto, han hecho que el progreso social sea más difícil, pero por eso aún más extraordinario.

Cuba necesita nuestra solidaridad. ¡Exija que los Estados Unidos pongan fin al bloqueo ilegal de la nación isleña! Y exprese su solidaridad con los manifestantes del Washington Square que corearon: “¡Las vidas de las personas trans negras valen!”

FOTO: BILL HACKWELL



Pride & anti-war struggle go hand-in-hand

Honor Marielle Franco and Chelsea Manning

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oppressed peoples. She was a councilwoman in Brazil and member of the Socialism and Liberty Party (PSOL). She was a Black LGBTQ woman who challenged the system directly at its roots.

She was from Maré, a favela neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro. Neighborhoods like these, which consist of mainly poor and working-class Black and Brown people, are not properly cared for by the government. She was working to defend the human rights of Black women and other oppressed peoples in Brazil.

Before her death, Franco was exposing police brutality and organizing against military intervention in the city. She worked with various women’s commissions and the Lesbian Front in Rio de Janeiro in order to promote a lesbian day of visibility in Brazil. The bill was defeated as a result of the reactionary character of the council.

Franco had bravely stood up at the time when U.S. imperialism was exerting its power to roll back the “red tide” of progressive governments and movements

in Latin America sparked by Venezuela’s Bolivarian Revolution. Washington was instrumental in supporting the frame-up of left-leaning former presidents Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff and the electoral campaign of ultrarightist Bolsonaro.

Franco was slain in March 2018, prompting mass protests throughout the country. After an attempt to cover up the facts in the case, the authorities had to reveal the connection of the people who carried out the assassination as being police officers with ties to the Bolsonaro family.

Let’s take a moment to honor this revolutionary hero that was taken from us and make a commitment to continue the struggle that she dedicated her life to.

It is in the interest of all working and oppressed peoples to unite and fight for a better world — a world without wars for oil and other resources, without racism, sexism and anti-LGBTQ2S bigotry. Internationalist solidarity is key to building the struggle in order to smash capitalism, imperialism and all forms of oppression.

Long live internationalist solidarity!



Above, Marielle Franco.

Left, grief and rage expressed at memorial.



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